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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/666,427	09/22/2003	Susan Davis	0118/001	8623
7590	01/28/2005		EXAMINER	
Steven W. Webb Law Offices of Steven W. Webb 655 2nd Street Encinitas, CA 92024			ARK, DARREN W	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3643	

DATE MAILED: 01/28/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/666,427	DAVIS ET AL.
Examiner	Art Unit	
Darren W. Ark	3643	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 07 December 2004.

2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 5 and 7 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) 5 is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 7 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on 22 September 2003 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner. Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a). Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.

5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Claim 5 is withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected Species, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Election was made **without** traverse in Paper filed 4/12/2004.

Drawings

2. The drawings are objected to because Fig. 13 is not shown on any of the drawing sheets. A proposed drawing correction or corrected drawings are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Objections

3. Claim 7 is objected to because of the following informalities:
Claim 7, line 12, the period “.” between “elements” and “connected” should be deleted. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

4. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

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5. Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In regard to claim 7, the phrase "each shield element separated from the other..." renders the claim vague and indefinite since "the other" refers to only a single other shield elements when in fact each intermediate shield element is separated from shield elements on either side (two sides).

In regard to claim 7, the phrase "whereby is provided a system..." renders the claim vague and indefinite. Possibly it should be rewritten as "whereby a system of plate protection is provided...."

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over in view of Keller 2,062,789 in view of Fuller 256,561 or Krolick 5,644,998.

Keller discloses a plurality of shield elements (5) each with a rectangular shape (see Fig. 3) with flat front and back surfaces; the bottom edge having sharp ridges (corners of 7) and capable of being inserted into the ground (see Fig. 2); the front surface of the shield element partially covered with a sticky substance (barrier of sticky

material 11), the sticky substance confined to a top portion of the each of the elements (see Figs. 1-3); and the shield elements (5) connected to each other as a single sheet (see Fig. 3), each shield element separated from the other by means of perforations (scores 4), but does not disclose the sticky substance embedded with grit. Fuller discloses an insect barrier (A) with a sticky substance (tallow or other soft or sticky substance) embedded with grit (sand). Krolick discloses mulching materials (1) with adhesive applied to adhere an abrasive substance (7) which is a material which irritates, dehydrates, or lacerates bodies of insects such as snails and slugs and can be for example diatomaceous earth. It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to employ the sand of Fuller or the abrasive substance such as diatomaceous earth of Krolick in the sticky substance of Keller in order to provide a slippery surface that causes insects to loose their footing in their attempt to reach the plants or that will injure the insects when the insects either attempt to traverse the abrasive substance or ingest it.

Response to Arguments

8. Applicant's arguments filed 12/7/2004 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

In regard to applicant's argument that "Applicant has addressed Examiner's objections...stated objective of protecting 'various sizes of gardens'... 'easy to implement and comparatively cost-effective', the Examiner contends that these limitations do not more specifically recite either the structure or function of the desired

invention and merely represent applicant's view of the advantages of the desired invention.

Conclusion

9. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Mercer '568 discloses an ant trap wherein the outer surface of the receptacle is provided with a coating comprised of a mixture of paint and sand so as to provide a foothold for ants; Thum '276 discloses sticky fly-paper where the object is to prevent the sticky material from spreading or running over the clean margin and onto the back of sheets by coarse sand to keep the sticky substance from flowing over the surface.

10. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

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Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Darren W. Ark whose telephone number is (703) 305-3733. The examiner can normally be reached on M-Th, 8:00am-6:30pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Peter M. Poon can be reached on (703) 308-2574. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Darren W. Ark
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3643

DWA